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RETAIL TRADE IN THE USSR AND THE SHORTCOMINGS OF TRADE
 ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PERIOD OCTOBER 1952-JANUARY 1953

Comment: The following report is a compilation by republics of information from articles dealing with retail trade in consumer goods and services in the USSR which appeared in the Soviet press between October 1952 and January 1953. While stressing the improvement and expansion of retail trade, the newspapers continued to criticize the trade organizations for poor service, fraudulent treatment of customers, and acceptance of low-grade products from industry.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

According to Moskovskiy Komsomolets, during the period 1947-1952, the number of retail trade and public eating enterprises in the USSR increased by more than 178,000 units, of which 97,000 were stores.(1)

As reported by the periodical Sovetskaya Knizhnaya Torgovlya, approximately 7,000 new stores were put into operation in state and cooperative trade in 1952 alone.(2)

Izvestiya reported in December 1952 that the Council of Experts of the All-Union Chamber of Commerce had approved many new samples of consumer goods; featured among them were new fabrics manufactured by the Bol'shaya Ivanovskaya Manufaktura, Trekhgornaya Manufaktura Combine imeni Dzerzhinskiy, and other manufacturing enterprises. It was planned to produce a total of 17 million meters of fabrics of new patterns.(3)

In January 1953, Trud reported that the USSR leather and footwear industry was developing over 3,000 samples of footwear. Some 300 new styles had already been put into production. The output of men's thick leather sandals in 1953 was to be twice as great as in 1952, while the 1953 output of women's fur-trimmed overshoes was to be more than 1.5 million pairs.

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The Trud article also stated that the RSFSR textile and dry goods industries were designing 680 new styles for their products, including 170 new styles of neckties. More than 3 million neckties were to be produced in 1953.

The RSFSR porcelain and pottery industry is also expanding, according to Trud. There is a greater selection of dishware, and household items are of better quality.(4)

Moscow

According to Vechernyaya Moskva of 29 January 1953, the retail commodity turnover in Moscow in 1952 increased 24 percent over 1950. Sales of meat products, fats, silk fabrics, television sets, etc. increased considerably. The Fifth Five-Year Plan envisages the opening of 300 stores and 125 public eating enterprises in Moscow, as well as the construction of four large department stores(univermags), one of which will be three to four times as large as the present Central Department Store. In 1952, a great deal of work was done toward expanding the trade network. By 1953, 117 consolidated stores were to be put into operation, allowing improved service to the consumer and reducing distribution expenditures. The article continued its discussion of the Moscow trade network as follows: Specialization of Moscow's trade network was the most important measure undertaken in 1952. During the last three years, [1950 through 1952] 218 new food stores were put into operation. However, the network of public dining rooms and lunch counters and snack bars, although considerably expanded, is still insufficient. The Ministry of Trade USSR, the Division of Public Dining of the Moscow City Executive Committee, and "Mosglavrestoran" (Moscow Main Administration of Restaurants) are responsible for this situation. The operation of many public dining rooms of "Mosglavrestoran" is extremely unsatisfactory.

The trade network and public eating enterprises frequently violate the rules of Soviet trade. Industrial trade enterprises of light, local, and cooperative industry continue to deliver to the trade network commodities of inferior quality. In 1952, there were 2,476 registered complaints about the inferior quality products of certain enterprises.(5)

In another January 1953 article, Vechernyaya Moskva reported that Moscow trade organizations fulfilled the 1952 plan for retail commodity turnover on 27 December 1952, ahead of schedule. During the remaining days of 1952, they sold over half a million rubles of commodities. In 1952, as compared with 1950, the sale of meat products increased 86 percent, animal fats 76 percent, silk fabrics 73 percent, and knitwear 50 percent. The consumers received 70 percent more cultural goods, such as television sets and clocks, than in 1950.

The paper then discussed the consolidation and specialization program of the Moscow trade network as follows:

Until recently, Moscow had a large number of very small trade enterprises which were crowded together in inconvenient locations. All this prevented efficient service to consumers. Many of these stores were operating unprofitably. The first steps toward the consolidation of small stores were successful; the retail commodity turnover increased sharply and administrative expenditures were reduced. This effected a saving into the wage fund, decreased distribution expenditures, and increased accumulation. The consolidation of small stores is continuing. Fifty consolidated stores with improved facilities have already been put into operation. Consolidation of more than 100 stores is still in progress.

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However, the consolidation and specialization program of the trade network still has serious shortcomings. Of 83 stores which were to be consolidated in 1952, only 50 were put into operation, and of 77 planned specialized stores, only 62 were actually opened. Especially unsatisfactory was the performance of the Moscow Administration of Industrial Trade Organizations. Of 30 trade areas assigned to the administration, stores were opened in only 14 areas and with long delay past the established date. The new Fifth Five-Year Plan set the goal of putting into operation 300 stores and 250 public eating enterprises in the newly constructed residential areas of Moscow. (6)

According to Izvestiya, of 21 November 1952, Moscow had more than 100 specialized stores for the sale of housewares, furniture, and other goods (7)

As reported by Vechernyaya Moskva, in November 1952, the "Gastronom" Store No 1 had a large daily turnover of food commodities as follow: meat, 6 tons; sausage, 3.5 tons; butter, 3 tons; sugar, 4 tons; 70,000 eggs; fruit, more than 4 tons. Other products, including fruit from the Crimea and Central Asia, canned goods from Riga, fish from Astrakhan', pastries, candies and other delicacies, were also available there. In addition, the store was taking orders for delivery to many places in the city, sometimes filling as many as 350 orders daily. (8)

Vechernyaya Moskva also reported that the "Pishchetorg" Store No 16 of Zhelznodorozhnyy Rayon had the following products in stock, as of October 1952: herring from the Far East, canned meat from Armavir, canned fruit from the Moldavian SSR and Odessa, various products from the Moscow Meat Combine, wine from the Georgian, Armenian, and Tadzhik SSRs, and products of many other food enterprises. In the last few years, the demand for prepared fish, high-grade grape wine, and high-quality meat products increased greatly. This store is one of the many hundreds of Moscow trade enterprises doing a large volume of business daily. (9)

In a January 1953 article, Vechernyaya Moskva stated that a first-class bakery and confectionery store and a "Gastronom" store had been put into operation in Moscow. In only 2 years, 40 large stores were opened in Leningradskiy Rayon of Moscow. In one suburban area, where in 1950 there were only six trade enterprises, at the beginning of 1953 there were 14 trade enterprises such as bakeries, drug stores, manufactured goods stores, bookstores, a public dining room, and a number of others. Previously, the whole trade network of some residential areas consisted only of three stores, but by the beginning of 1953 there were 4 times as many stores. For example, in Leningradskiy Rayon, where in 1950 there had been only three specialized stores, at the beginning of 1953 there were 21 stores. They were put into operation by the "Bakaleya," "Gastronom," "Moskovoshch" /Moscow Specialized Trade Organization for the Sale of Vegetables?/, "Mostekstil" /Moscow Specialized Trade Organization for the Sale of Textiles?/, and other specialized trade organizations. The rayon's retail commodity turnover increased considerably. In 1951, it amounted to 940 million rubles, and in 1952 it reached 1.2 billion rubles. (10)

Leningrad

According to Izvestiya of 3 January 1953, the USSR is on the road to creating an abundance of food and manufactured commodities and complete satisfaction of consumer demand. For example, in Leningrad, greater quantities of the following goods were sold in 1952 than in 1950: meat, 69 percent; animal fats, 66 percent; dairy products, 40 percent; sausage products, 30 percent; silk and woolen fabrics, 15 percent; and leather footwear, 20 percent. Considerably more passenger cars, television sets, radio receivers, cameras, and bicycles were sold in 1952 than in 1950.

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The article described the Leningrad trade network as follows: There are about 100 trade and sales organization, and over 3,000 trade and public eating enterprises employing a great number of trade workers in Leningrad. Many stores have undergone capital repairs and are supplied with the necessary equipment and inventory. "Lenodezhad" /Leningrad Specialized Trade Organization for the Sale of Clothing?/, "Lenobuv" /Leningrad Specialized Trade Organization for the Sale of Footwear?/, and other stores are now able to meet the demands of Soviet trade.

Stalinskiy, Kirovskiy, Sverdlovskiy, Moskovskiy, and other rayons of Leningrad had smaller trade networks than the central rayons. To improve service to consumers in these rayons, the stores and public dining rooms were expanded and equipped with the latest machinery. In the newly built residential areas alone, 104 manufactured goods and food stores were put into operation in 1952. In the city, stores trading in food commodities installed 632 refrigeration units.

Stating that the assortment and quality of goods offered for sale in Leningrad has also improved, Izvestiya continued: The Leningrad Meat Combine imeni Kirov introduced a new assortment of sausage products, semi-processed meat, and packaged meat, and now delivers to trade organizations 120 different products. In 1952, the confectionery factories increased the assortment of candies, caramels, and cookies. Regularly conducted conferences between consumers and suppliers play an important role in improving the quality and selection of goods.(11)

According to Leningradskaya Pravda, the network of specialized stores in Leningrad and Leningradskaya Oblast is expanding. In the last 3 years/December 1949-December 1952/, 548 stores and 177 public eating enterprises were opened in Leningrad and Leningradskaya Oblast. The network of specialized stores selling meat, fish, fruits, vegetables, groceries and special foods, footwear, and ready-to-wear clothing was also expanded.(12)

According to a January 1953 article in Leningradskaya Pravda, the output of consumer goods in Leningrad is increasing. Leningrad local industry exceeded the 1952 plan for consumer goods production by 72 million rubles, and completed it 25 days ahead of schedule. The plants and factories of the local industry and rayon industrial combines considerably increased the assortment of products. Electric floor polishers, skates, and photographic equipment produced by Leningrad enterprises appeared in the stores of the city. Leningrad local industry produces commodities of more than 1,500 brand names. Leningrad Perfumery No 4 of Glavparfumer (Main Administration of the Perfume Industry) manufactures a large quantity of perfumes for all parts of the USSR. The factory produces more than 100,000 bottles of perfume and eau de cologne daily, and large quantities of powder, cream, and tooth powder.

The Leningradskaya Pravda article then made the following criticisms: While the operations of industrial enterprises generally improved, some of them still fail to manufacture enough of the commodities needed by the population. Consumers also continue to complain about the shortage of salad greens and vegetables. Sovkhozes and kolkhozes of Leningradskaya Oblast are still slow in expanding hotbed and greenhouse gardening.

Supplying of stores and public dining rooms is often done without consideration for the established retail commodity plan and consumer demand. Leningrad sales office of Glavkonserv, (Main Administration of the Canning Industry), Glavrybsbyt (Main Administration of Fish Sales), and Glavkonditer (Main Administration of Confectionery Industry) do not supply Leningrad and Leningradskaya Oblast with required commodities regularly. In the third quarter 1952 alone, 250 trade enterprises in Leningrad ended their operations with a deficit. Among them were 146 enterprises of "Lenglavrestoran" (Leningrad Main Administration of Restaurants), 63 trade organizations of the Administration of Food Trade, and 19 enterprises of "Lenovoshch" /Leningrad Specialized Trade Organization for the Sale of Vegetables?/

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Public dining rooms and small restaurants also have serious shortcomings. Many enterprises of Nevskiy and Kirovskiy rayons reduced the number of public dining rooms, and many plants' and factories' dining rooms offer poor service.

In Leningrad City and Leningradskaya Oblast there are more than 100,000 trade workers. However, there are many shortcomings in the selection, distribution, and training of personnel. Some trade workers in charge of materials and supplies in the administrations of trade organizations, are dishonest, while the managers of food and manufactured goods trade organizations fail to supervise the operation of stores and public dining rooms.(13)

Other RSFSR Cities and Oblasts

An Izvestiya report of December 1952 stated that greater quantities of the following products were sold to the urban and rural population of Ivanovskaya Oblast in 1952 than in 1951: bread, groats, butter, sugar, and other food products; as well as silk fabrics, ready-to-wear clothing, housewares, and cultural goods. The trade network increased by 768 enterprises over the prewar period. In 1952 alone, 265 specialized stores, stalls, tearooms, and dining rooms were opened in the oblast.

The article pointed, however, to many shortcomings in the organization of trade and public eating enterprises which fail year after year to meet the plan for retail commodity turnover. Ivanovo City and other industrial centers were not supplied with potatoes and vegetables. The store employees shortchange and short-weight the customers, and the stores lack needed goods. The trade organizations fail to study consumer demand and permit errors in the distribution of commodities by rayons. For example, the Volga Region Trading Organization now /December 1952/ has 1.5 million rubles worth of slow-moving footwear and 579,000 rubles worth of hosiery in its warehouses. Shorts and summer shirts are delivered during the winter season. The goods are kept in unsuitable warehouses and get damaged. The managers of industrial and trade organizations also fail to observe the government's decree on the conclusion of economic agreements. Even when such agreements are made, they are not adhered to.(14)

Another Izvestiya article reported that the trade network in the cities and rural areas of Tomskaya Oblast continues to grow. In 1952, 130 new stores and tents trading in manufactured and food commodities were opened. The trade turnover, in comparison with 1951 increased considerably. In 10 months of 1952, the stores sold 15 million rubles worth of silk and woolen fabrics. The demand for cultural goods increased sharply. City and rural dwellers acquired nearly 3,000 bicycles and motorcycles, as well as many radio receivers and phonographs. Almost 1 1/2 times more books were sold than in the preceding year.(15)

Ukrainian SSR

According to a Pravda Ukrainy article, the following new specialized stores were opened in the Ukrainian SSR in the third quarter 1952: 22 stores selling outer clothing, 17 fur and hat stores, 45 footwear stores, 4 stores selling miscellaneous manufactured goods, etc.

In Stalinskaya Oblast, 15 specialized stores were opened; in Khar'kov, 9 stores; and in Voroshilovsk, 7 stores. Two republic trade organizations, "Ukrodezhda" and "Ukrobuiv" /Ukrainian specialized trade organization for the sale of clothing and footwear/, opened stores in Dnepropetrovsk, Stalino, L'vov, and Odessa.(16)

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In a January 1953 article, Pravda Ukrainy discussed the constantly expanding trade network in urban and rural areas of L'vovskaya Oblast, Ukrainian SSR, where more and more premises are being turned over to stores, public dining rooms, public tearooms, and lunchrooms. In 1952 alone, 70 new stores and department stores were put into operation in rural areas and rayon centers of the oblast. In Velikomostovskiy Rayon, buildings were constructed for a new rayon department store, a restaurant, and four stores. The construction of stores and public eating enterprises was to expand even more in 1953. In the rayon centers and rural areas of the oblast, over 100 buildings were to be constructed for the trade network, including 5 rayon department stores, 26 rural stores, 4 cultural goods stores, and 14 public tearooms and dining rooms.(17)

Another Pravda Ukrainy article of January 1953 reported many deficiencies in the organization of trade in Nikolayev, Ukrainian SSR. For example, at the beginning of the 1952-1953 winter season, stores had irregular deliveries of potatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, and other vegetables and fruits, despite the exceptionally rich harvest of vegetables and potatoes gathered by kolkhozes and sovkhoses of the oblast. The city had no specialized stores for the sale of vegetables and fruits.

The paper continued its criticism as follows: The city trade in bread and bakery products is also poorly organized. The Nikolayev Bread Baking Trust regularly fails to fulfill the assortment plan, and at the same time fails to use the highgrade flour which it receives. During most of the month, the full norm of bread and bakery products is not reached, while toward the end of the month, the city is overstocked with these products. As a result, stores return many bread products, or force customers to buy stale bread.

The work of the Nikolayev Light Industry Sales Organization is also poorly planned. At the beginning of a given quarter, the base accumulates commodity stocks at its warehouses, and at the end of the quarter begins to release them in large quantities. In addition, the managers fail to provide a variety of assortment, sizes, and color. Trade organizations are lax in studying consumer demand. This causes some stores to have too many commodities, and others to be short of them.

Many shortcomings in the work of trade organizations are due to poor selection, training, and distribution of personnel. For example, over 30 of the persons working in the city "Fishchetorg" Store had formerly been convicted and dismissed for all types of unlawful operations and violation of Soviet trade regulations. The selection of personnel in public dining rooms and restaurants is also poor.(18)

Estonian SSR

According to data given by Sovetskaya Estoniya, 33 public eating enterprises were put into operation in the Estonian SSR as of October 1952 alone, including two well-equipped dining rooms in Narva and Tartu. In addition, 86 kolkhoz markets were to be put into operation in 1952.(19)

In another article, Sovetskaya Estoniya stated that the Ministry of Trade Estonian SSR, according to data for the first three quarters of 1952, achieved some reduction of distribution expenditures. But the work of a number of trade organizations was still unsatisfactory. For example, the Tallin Food Trust over spent 533,000 rubles, the larger part of this sum for unnecessary expenditures for motor and other transport, maintenance of buildings, and depreciation of equipment. Over 100,000 rubles consisted of losses due to keeping commodities longer than the established norms. Unplanned losses suffered by the Ministry of

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Trade Estonian SSR for 9 months of 1952 alone amounted to almost 2.5 million rubles. The workers of the ministry explained that half of these losses were due to markdowns on footwear. The markdowns were carried out because the footwear was bought without consideration for consumer demand. Distribution expenditures were also exceeded considerably by consumer cooperatives of the republic in 1952.(20)

Latvian SSR

According to Sovetskaya Latvya, as of 28 December 1952 the Latvian system of rayon unions of consumers' societies had 40 stores, mostly in rural areas. In December 1952, a new department store was opened for the sale of dry goods, footwear, housewares, and cultural goods.(21)

However, in another December 1952 article, Sovetskaya Latvya reported that Riga stores seldom carry such items as lamp shades for table lamps separately, but sell them only with electric lamps. Sometimes, it is hard to get inexpensive drinking glasses, and the selection of decanters, sugar bowls, and flower vases is also small.

According to this article, Riga and republic trade organizations do not pay enough attention to consumer demand. Warehouses have stocks of high quality dishware worth hundreds of thousands of rubles. However, because of the inefficiency of trade workers, commodities fail to reach the buyers.(22)

Lithuanian SSR

According to Sovetskaya Litva, new kolkhoz stores were opened in some agricultural artels of Tauragskiy Rayon, Lithuanian SSR, in 1952. Seventeen kolkhozes of this rayon had stores. Commodity turnover in agricultural areas was constantly increasing. During the first 10 months of 1952, rural stores sold to kolkhoz farmers more than a million rubles worth of commodities.(23)

In an October 1952 article, Sovetskaya Litva reported that a significant increase in the network of enterprises of the Ministry of Local Industry, industrial cooperatives, and invalids cooperatives in the Lithuanian SSR in recent years has permitted a considerable increase in the production of consumer goods. However, the article reported the following deficiencies:

Many enterprises of the Ministry of Local Industry, Lithuanian Council of Industrial Cooperatives, and Lithuanian Union of Invalids Cooperatives still fail to carry out the tasks set before them. During the first half of 1952, the Ministry of Local Industry failed to supply the trade network with 32 percent of the planned amount of enamelware, 22 percent of the hardware and metal household goods, 59 percent of the furniture, etc. Trade organizations also failed to receive large quantities of electrical items, furniture, and other commodities. Opportunities for broadening the variety and improving the quality of products were not fully utilized. Operations for utilization and new types of products which could be developed by local industry enterprises were not fully carried out. Trade organizations of the republic are forced to import these commodities from other oblasts and republics, resulting in large and unjustifiable purchases and shipping expenditures.

There were many cases of inferior commodities being delivered to the trade network by suppliers. For example, in the first half of 1952, 494,000 rubles' worth of nails, 28,000 rubles' worth of furniture, and 47,000 rubles' worth of fur collars were rejected. Similar cases were noted in enterprises of the Lithuanian Council of Industrial Cooperatives. For example, 736 units of galvanized ware produced by one artel did not meet the quality standard and were rejected.(24)

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Sovetskaya Litva complained in another November 1952 article that many of the 23 rayon consumer societies fail to fulfill their plans for retail commodity turnover. It continued as follows:

Many stores lack a sufficient supply of household goods, such as rope, buck-etc, lamp and window glass, nails, cement, etc. Faulty planning leads to irregular distribution of these goods among various rayons. For example, 8 tons of wheel grease were delivered to one rayon consumer union, while another failed to receive any; still another rayon had a shortage of leather articles, while the neighboring rayon had a surplus, etc.

Networks of small trading centers often fail to fulfill the commodity turnover plans. In some rayons, large-scale specialized stores are put into operation very slowly, although there is no lack of funds; in addition, there are still many cases of embezzlement and misappropriation in the cooperative organizations of the oblasts. This is explained by the laxity of the managers of various oblast consumer unions in their choice of personnel. (25)

In a December 1952 article, Sovetskaya Litva reported on shortcomings in the operations of the trade network in Skuodasskiy Rayon, Klaypedskaya Oblast, as follows: Many commodities remain in warehouses for years and eventually deteriorate, while the assortment of commodities in stores is extremely poor. Children's toys, women's and men's hats, and other necessary commodities are not on sale. There are cases when commodities of poor quality get into the trade network.

Kolkhoz markets are very important in the fulfillment of trade turnover. But the rayon consumer union and the rayon executive committee do not concern themselves with the organization of kolkhoz trade. The public dining rooms of the rayon consumer union are also unsatisfactory. Their meals are poor and expensive. Supervision of the work of stores and stalls is poorly organized. Dishonest elements which get into the trade network take advantage of the lack of supervision and embezzle or squander tens of thousands of rubles. (26)

Karelo-Finnish SSR

In November 1952, Leninskoye Znamya called for improvement of the system of potato supply in the Karelo-Finnish SSR and made the following criticism: The Main Administration of Workers' Supply of the Ministry of Light Industry operates particularly poorly. The ORSs (Workers Supply Divisions) of timber managements produced and delivered only a little over half of the quota designated in the plan. Ten tons of potatoes ready for shipment were piled up in kolkhozes. The ORSs of timber managements should have moved this load of potatoes, but no steps were taken to speed up the delivery of the potatoes. In one case, the ORS of a certain timber management delivered only 110 tons of potatoes of the 205 called for in the plan.

The ORS of the Kirov Railroad also fails to carry out potato shipments. This ORS did not fulfill even one third of the designated plan. Consumer trade in potatoes was also poorly organized in Petrozavodsk, where ten carloads of potatoes were left standing for a long period. (27)

Moldavian SSR

According to Sovetskaya Moldaviya, of 14 December 1952, the retail commodity network in the republic during the preceding 2 years expanded considerably. During that time, 327 new stores and shops were put into operation, including 49 rayon stores, 25 cultural goods stores, 74 household goods stores, and 219 rural stores. (28)

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In a January 1953 article, Sovetskaya Moldaviya criticized enterprises of the Ministry of Light Industry Moldavian SSR for producing large quantities of inferior commodities. For example, in 1952, about 9 percent of the footwear produced by these enterprises was low grade, resulting in the return of thousands of pairs of footwear to the factories. At the same time, these enterprises were producing an enormous quantity of footwear for which there was no demand. Some 35 million rubles' worth of footwear had accumulated in city trade organizations alone. Sewing factories were also producing large quantities of low-grade and defective products. Many sewing factories, in the pursuit of plan fulfillment and to save material, produced articles of small sizes only.

The paper went on to say that in 1952, trade organizations failed to receive from industry more than 2 million rubles' worth of the most demanded and necessary commodities, such as men's and children's woolen and cotton suits, waterproof overcoats, dresses, and jackets. Industrial cooperatives also failed to produce commodities of acceptable quality. During the first 9 months of 1952 alone, industrial cooperatives paid to local trade organizations 280,000 rubles for violation of contractual obligations. Altogether, the Council of Industrial Cooperatives Moldavian SSR suffered a deficit of over half a million rubles from low-grade and defective commodities.(29)

According to another Sovetskaya Moldaviya article, the supply of agricultural produce and livestock to cities of the Moldavia SSR increased considerably in 1952 as a result of increased kolkhoz production of marketable agricultural commodities.

However, the paper stated that deliveries of kolkhoz produce could be bigger if the Ministry of Trade Moldavian SSR and the rayon executive committees reorganized kolkhoz trade. They plan the deliveries of agricultural produce and are in charge of construction and expansion of kolkhoz markets. However, the funds allotted to these organizations for construction of kolkhoz markets are not fully utilized. For example, in 1952, the planned construction of pavilions and the expansion of markets in Kishinev, Kalarash, Rybnitsa, Ungeny, Orgeyev, and Kotovskoye were not fulfilled. Some rayons have no markets at all.

The lack of daily supervision of kolkhoz trade brought an accumulation of hundreds of tons of agricultural products. The paper charged that, although in 1952 a million rubles were allocated for expansion, repair, and sanitation, the servicing of kolkhoz workers at the central market in Kishinev is very poor. Kolkhoz representatives and kolkhoz workers lose much time waiting for space and weighing machines. Because of the lack of refrigeration, it is not possible to store perishable products. In addition, food products are sold under unsanitary conditions.(30)

Georgian SSR

A great deal of criticism of the Georgian SSR trade network was contained in several Zarya Vostoka articles in September and November 1952. In one article, the paper stated that the commodity turnover plan for the first 9 months of 1952 was completed only 79.6 percent. The oblast unions of consumer cooperatives failed to take proper account of consumer demands and sometimes failed to supply even such essential items as soap, salt, kerosene, and thread. Persons who had been convicted of embezzlement and misappropriation were still accepted for employment in the trade network.(31)

In another article, Zarya Vostoka stated that the trade organizations of Tbilisskaya Oblast still retained undesirable practices such as short-weighting and short-measuring, embezzlement, and squandering. The party organizations in the trade enterprises and consumer cooperatives were failing to take proper steps to correct the situation.(32)

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A third Zarya Vostoka article, complained that the organization of trade in rural areas also suffered from many deficiencies. There seemed to be no order in the planning and procurement of goods. Rural stores of Akhalikhskiy, Akhalkalakskiy, Adigenskiy, Bogdanovskiy, and Kedskiy rayons often lacked everyday consumer goods. There was a particular shortage of winter goods. The procurement of eggs, potatoes, vegetables, meat, dairy products, and many other agricultural products was lagging sharply. Squandering and embezzlement of cooperative funds, and short-weighting and shortchanging of customers were still very much in evidence. There was also a lack of properly trained personnel.(33)

Azerbaydzhan SSR

According to Bakinskiy Rabochiy of 14 December 1952, the network of stores, public dining rooms, booths, and stalls in the Azerbaydzhan SSR is expanding every year. In 1952, 100 new stores were put into operation in Baku alone.

Turning to criticism, the paper wrote: Although the trade organizations have unlimited opportunities for expanding and improving trade, they fail to meet the turnover plan. Trade operations of "Azerittifak" and of the Ministry of Trade are unsatisfactory. The cooperative stores of Kazakhskiy, Mirbashirskiy, Kusarskiy, and Khanlurkiy rayons, the ORS of the "Leninest" Trust, and the First and Second Baku "Pishchetorg" stores of the "Gastronom" network have a constant shortage of commodities, while other stores have a surplus.

Individual trade organizations still fail to use up their commodity stocks and this has an adverse effect on the fulfillment of the commodity turnover plan. The Azerbaydzhan "Glavrybsbyt" (Main Administration for the Sale of Fish) base operates very poorly and failed to fulfill the third-quarter 1952 plan for delivery of a large quantity of fish products to stores of the republic.(34)

In another December 1952 article, Bakinskiy Rabochiy stated that in the past 2 years, the Baku trade network increased by more than 400 stores, public dining rooms, tents, mobile units, and stalls. In comparison with the prewar period, the retail commodity turnover increased 88 percent, while the turnover in public eating enterprises increased twofold. A number of specialized trading organizations were organized and many new specialized stores were opened in the city. The supply of the trade network was also improved.

The paper then pointed to many serious shortcomings in the work of trading organizations as follows:

The established plan for commodity turnover is not completed. The operation of the Baku "Pishchetorg" specialized network of the Ministry of Light Industry and the Ministry of Local Industry, and that of other trading organizations is not good. Their stores systematically violate the established assortment plan and fail to plan for delivery of products.

The Baku Trade Division of the Ministry of Trade Azerbaydzhan SSR and trade organizations do not spread out their trade enterprises evenly throughout the whole network but rather concentrate them mostly in the center of the city.

Especially low-quality commodities of poor assortment are produced by the local industry and industrial cooperatives. The supplying of petroleum workers and trade organization in petroleum rayons, especially in remote petroleum rayons, is very unsatisfactory. The Baku Trade Division is not at all interested in the organization of trade in petroleum rayons and does not extend any help to the ORS. It also fails to regulate the trade at kolkhoz markets.

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In the fourth quarter 1952, the work of the Baku Department Store and some ORSs of the "Azneft" Administration of Workers' Supply became worse and the enterprises continuously failed to fulfill the plan for commodity turnover. Most trade systems show above-norm commodity stocks. For example, the "Azneft" Trust URS (Administration of Workers' Supply) has 90 million rubles' worth of such surplus commodity stocks; the Baku Department Store, 28 million rubles; and local trade organizations of the Baku Trade Division, 20 million rubles. At the same time, in a number of stores there is a shortage of some necessary goods such as salt, tobacco products, household soap, vinegar, mustard, knitwear, and others. (35)

In January 1953, Bakinskiy Rabochiy reported that many enterprises of light, local, food, and other branches of industry, while exceeding the 1952 production plan, produced commodities of inferior quality. The paper pointed to serious shortcomings in local and food industries, especially the industrial cooperatives. For example, the Ministry of Local Industry Nakhichevanskaya ASSR, while exceeding the plan as a whole, systematically failed to meet the plan for quality and assortment of products. Half a million rubles' worth of finished commodities not in demand piled up in warehouses of trade organizations of Nakhichevan' City. Because of very inferior quality, instead of the 10,000 pairs of footwear specified by the plan, only 1,584 pairs were sold. In another example, the Ordubad Cannery produced 233,000 rubles' worth of substandard apricot jelly.

Sales bases of the Ministry of Trade Azerbaydzhan SSR and "Azerotiffak" were also guilty of distributing inferior-quality products of a limited assortment. (36)

In a fourth article, published in December 1952 Bakinskiy Rabochiy complained that the problem of the optimum distribution of the trade network was still not getting enough attention. It discussed this problem as follows:

The Ministry of Trade Azerbaydzhan SSR, the Baku Trade Division, and trade organizations do not have any definite plans for organizing the trade network by individual rayons of Baku and the city as a whole. The lack of adequate planning often results in a haphazard distribution of stores. For example, the following food stores are located within a short distance of each other: two "Gastronom" stores, a store of the Baku Meat Combine, and two "Torgmorts" (Maritime Transport Trade Organization) stores. Store No 14, of the First Baku "Pishchetorg" is also not far way. As a result, "Gastronom" Store No 6 systematically fails to fulfill the retail commodity turnover plan. At the same time, a number of residential areas, especially those located in the mountainous part of Baku, are not served by enough stores. Public eating enterprises have the same shortcomings. Large restaurants -- the "Kavkaz," "Azerbaydzhan," "Baku," "Shark" and "Gek-Cel" -- restaurants, and public dining rooms No 1 and No 7 -- are concentrated within a short distance of each other, while an enormous rayon in another part of the city has only three restaurants. A correct distribution of the trade network provides the consumer with easy access to it and improves service to the population. Concentration of a large number of similar-type stores hampers the execution by these stores of the retail commodity turnover plan and, in the end, increases distribution expenditures.

Not all of the existing specialized stores conform to their designation. For example, specialized store No 27 of the Second Baku "Pishchetorg," which sells milk and dairy products, for some unknown reason also sells meat. As a result, the store cannot organize an efficient trade in dairy products and the sale of meat is conducted under unsuitable conditions. The same conditions prevail in one of the stores of the Baku Meat Combine.

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Experience in Moscow and a number of other cities showed that a rational distribution of the trade network and consolidation of small stores proves to be of value, assures improved service to the population, increases the trade turnover, and reduces distribution expenditures. The lack of a definite plan for the expansion of the retail commodity network in Baku hampers construction and equipment of stores in new buildings.

In planning new buildings, requirements of trade organizations often are not considered. Trade premises in new buildings are not up to standard and do not have the necessary conveniences for consumers. Many stores have no basements for storage of products. Planners and builders fail to provide for reasonable ventilation of stores, conveniences for consumers and counter workers, storage facilities, refrigerators, etc. The Baku Trade Division does not examine the projects submitted for its approval but approves them perfunctorily. (37)

Armenian SSR

In December 1952, Kommunist charged that trade organizations of Kafanskiy Rayon, Armenian SSR, were violating Soviet trade regulations, including such violations as short-weighting, shortchanging, and wasting state funds. It accused the managers of the Kafan branch of the Armenian Trading Organization and the Kafanskiy Rayon Consumers Union of failure to reorganize their work, to take into account complaints about shortcomings, or to study consumer demand.

To the good, the paper pointed out that the trade turnover had increased considerably and the trade network had expanded in Kafanskiy Rayon by 6 enterprises since 1947. In 1952, 10 million more rubles worth of commodities were sold to the population than in 1951.

The paper continued by stating that, at the same time, a number of cases of violations of trade regulations had occurred in Kafan, and the trade turnover plans were not fulfilled. It described these shortcomings as follows:

Although the warehouses have a great quantity of manufactured goods and food products, the stores often are short of teakettles, coarse calico, thread, cuff links, and canned fish. Some trade centers are very unsanitary because many trade workers do not observe the rules of sanitation in transferring commodities. Store No 18 is located in cramped and damp premises where commodities are piled up in a disorderly fashion. Repairs of stores usually consist of whitewashing on the eve of holidays. The show windows are not attractively arranged and show no price tags. Stores No 2, No 4, and No 6 are located on the same street. Although store No 4 constantly exceeds the trade turnover plan, the remaining stores systematically fail to meet the plan. Trade enterprises in Kafan, especially the ORS of Construction and Installation Administration No 2, continue their short-measuring and short-weighting practice, which result in a waste of state funds and increased debits. In Store No 8, debits exceeded 1,100,000 rubles, and no auditing took place for 6 months. Price regulations on commodities are also violated in the stores of the Kafanskiy Rayon Consumers Union. Poor selection and distribution of personnel account for the shortcomings in trade organizations. (38)

In another article, Kommunist pointed out serious shortcomings in the trade network of Krasnosel'skiy Rayon caused mainly by unsatisfactory selection and training of trade workers. Its complaint ran as follows:

Workers of consumer cooperatives of Krasnosel'skiy Rayon are too slow in reorganizing their work to improve service to the consumer. The Krasnosel'skiy Rayon Union of Consumer Cooperatives continues to use obsolete methods of distribution of goods to the network without considering consumer demand. During the

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last 7 years, ready-to-wear clothing and footwear of inferior quality and old styles were piled up for a long time in the stores of the villages of Krasnoye, Bashkend, Chaykend, Shorzh, and others. The delivery of commodities to rural stores is often delayed.

The sale of cultural goods in the rayon center and rural stores is very limited as the rayon has no special cultural goods store. There is a larger demand for sports goods, but they are not on sale. Radio receivers, phonographs, bicycles, skis, and cameras are not available for long periods at a time. The procurement office of the Krasnosel'skiy Rayon Consumers' Union is operating especially poorly.

The plan for procurement of agricultural products is not fulfilled at all. For example, the procurement office by 1 November 1952 had fulfilled the 1952 plan for the procurement of meat 13 percent; for eggs, 44.5 percent; for oil, 10.5 percent; and of 11 types of agricultural products, only 7 types.(39)

Kazakh SSR

According to Kazakhstanskaya Pravda of 31 November 1952, the retail trade network and the network of specialized stores of the republic are constantly expanding. In 1952, as compared with previous years, the number of textile stores had increased fivefold; shoe stores, sevenfold; and sewn goods stores, fourfold.(40)

In another article, Kazakhstanskaya Pravda stated that more than 335 million rubles' worth of commodities were sold to the population during the first 11 months of 1952 than during the same period of 1951. In 1952, the trade network increased by more than 500 units. However, the "Glavtorg" (Main Trade Administration) of the republic failed to meet the 11-month 1952 plan for commodity turnover despite large commodity stocks piled up at warehouses. Large-scale organizations such as the Gur'yev, Semipalatinsk, and Kzyl-Orda city trading organizations lagged in their turnover plan fulfillment. The stores of the Vishnevskiy Rayon Consumers Union, Akmolinskaya Oblast, had a shortage of salt, household soap, kerosene, etc. The sales bases of "Glavshveysbyt" (Main Administration for the Sale of Sewn Products), "Glavobuv'sbyt" (Main Administration for the Sale of Footwear), and "Glavtekstil'sbyt" (Main Administration for the Sale of Textiles) failed to move the necessary assortment of commodities quickly enough from industry into the trade network. They also failed to deliver to trade organizations tens of millions of rubles' worth of products, mainly the winter assortment of commodities.(41)

Another Kazakhstanskaya Pravda article of December 1952 described, as a growing industrial city of the republic, but stated that its population is deprived of even the most indispensable commodities. For example, it is difficult to buy a lamp, bed, or radio receiver. Leninogorsk trade organizations during the first 10 months of 1952 completed only 78 percent of the retail commodity turnover plan. The city has no specialized stores of ready-to-wear clothing, furniture, and cultural goods. In 1952, the "Leninogorsksvinetsstroy" (Leninogorsk Lead Construction) Trust was required to build in Leninogorsk a department store, two manufactured commodities stores, and specialized meat and fish stores. However, this requirement had not been met at all as of the end of 1952.(42)

In a third December 1952 article, Kazakhstanskaya Pravda reported on the difficulty of purchasing vegetables and potatoes in the Alma-Ata trade network, as follows: Of the 23 stores that supply vegetables to the city, only seven are in operation, and then only sporadically and with a very limited selection. The source of the difficulty is the lack of storage facilities. Vegetables, instead of being stored in the proper bins, are simply dumped on the floor. In some stores, the sales personnel even lack such necessary equipment as ladles for dishing out pickles and sauerkraut. In some instances, they were observed using their bare hands. There is also a shortage of adequate warehouse facilities.(43)

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Kirgiz SSR

According to Sovetskaya Kirgiziya of 20 November 1952, in the past 4 years 964 stores and shops and 282 dining rooms, restaurants, tearooms, and lunchrooms were put into operation in the Kirgiz SSR. In the middle of 1952, the Kirgiz SSR retail trade network had increased, in comparison with 1949, by 13 percent, including 21 percent in consumer cooperatives and 67.3 percent in rural communities.

However, the paper then pointed to the following shortcomings in the trade network: Many trade organizations of the republic are not coping with their problems adequately. The retail trade turnover plan for the first 9 months of 1952 was fulfilled only 93.7 percent. Some rayon consumers unions were supplied with 100,000 rubles' worth of silk textiles, while other were not supplied at all.

Trade enterprises often fail to carry a minimum variety of goods. In many stores and shops of the consumer cooperatives of Frunzenskaya, Issyk-Kul'skaya, and Talasskaya oblasts no inventories and sales records are kept. The appearance of many trade enterprises is neglected. The managers of stores are careless about the upkeep of stores. No effort is made to advertise the goods, and the selection, of trade personnel is very poor. (44)

According to another November 1952 article in Sovetskaya Kirgiziya, industrial enterprises are required to produce articles of high quality and wide assortment and to sell their goods at the established prices. These requirements are not always met, particularly by artels of the industrial and invalids cooperatives, some artels persist in turning out poor quality goods and in overcharging. (45)

In a 12 December 1952 article, Sovetskaya Kirgiziya praised trade workers of the Issyk-Kul' Steamship Line, who since the beginning of 1952 had sold more than 7 million rubles worth of various manufactured and food commodities, thereby exceeding the 1952 retail commodity turnover plan. To improve service to water transport workers, the number of trade centers was increased and special stores for ships' crews were organized. (46)

Tadzhik SSR

According to Moskovskiy Komsomolets, kolkhoz workers of the Tadzhik SSR acquired about 16,000 bicycles, 30,000 radio receivers and loud-speakers, and 5,000 sewing machines during 1952. (1)

A December 1952 article in Kommunist Tadzhikistana, declared that the Ministry of Trade Tadzhik SSR and the Tadzhik Union of Consumer Cooperatives must improve the management of their local organs, eliminate shortcomings, and improve trade services

It discussed the situation as follows: The "Pishchetorg" Organization of Stalinabad City does not take care of the equipment and repairs of food stores. Many of its stores are not equipped to operate under winter conditions. Rural stores are also unsatisfactory. Stores of the Kolkhoz imeni Kirov, Kolkhoz imeni Zhadanov, and others are short of essential commodities, although these can be found at the bases. The above-mentioned stores not only violate Soviet trade regulations, but also fail to maintain the required business hours. Managers of the rayon unions of consumer cooperatives neglect the sale of consumer goods in kolkhoz stores and do not supervise operations of public eating enterprises. The public dining room of the Mikoyanabadskiy Rayon Union of Consumer Cooperatives, for example, is short of utensils and furniture. Trade organizations and public eating enterprises also lack qualified personnel. (47)

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In another December 1952 article, Kommunist Tadzhikistana complained of careless planning of retail commodity turnover by many Stalinabad trade organizations, resulting in systematic failure to meet turnover plans. It stated that trade organizations were carrying 40 million rubles' worth of above-norm commodities, and the Main Administration of Department Stores 15 million rubles' worth. The above norm commodity stocks had been accumulated from rejected goods at warehouses and sales organizations.

The paper stated that the trade organizations were reprimanded by the government for permitting poor-quality goods in the trade network. The operations of the sales bases also had many shortcomings. "Glavshveysbyt" (Main Administration for the Sale of Sewn Articles) and "Glavobuv'sbyt" (Main Administration for the Sale of Footwear) bases had a great accumulation of commodities not in demand at their warehouses. The management of "Glavshveysbyt" failed to consider the interests of industrial and trade organizations and needs of the population. During the first nine months of 1952, "Glavshveysbyt" failed to deliver to trade organizations of the republic more than 15 million rubles' worth of sewn and knitted goods. In 1952, embezzlements in the city trade organizations amounted to large sums of money. In 1952, as a result of unsatisfactory performance by workers, 440 trade enterprises and organizations were reported for violations of Soviet trade rules. 70 percent of the violations the defrauding of customers.(48)

Turkmen SSR

On 16 December 1952, Turkmenkaya Iskra reported that new specialized stores with a wide selection of sewn products, furniture, and household articles had been opened in Tedzhen and Iolotan'.

The paper then described the expanding rural trade network as follows: There are now more than 1,200 stores in rural areas of the republic. The majority of them were put into operation in the last few years. Now, every Turkmenian kolkhoz has a store. Turkmenbirlashik (Turkmen Consumer Union) stores sold over 15 million rubles' worth of commodities more in 1952 than during the corresponding period in 1951. Cotton growers, cattle breeders, silkworm breeders, and the village intelligentsia demand large quantities of furniture, silk products, motorcycles, bicycles, and other consumer goods.(49)

In a November 1952 article Turkmenkaya Iskra called on the bread baking industry to regulate and improve its trade in bread and rolls. The paper reported that there was a partial stoppage of trade in bread and rolls in Ashkhabad, that delivery of bread to the trade network was poorly organized and that bread for shops and stores was delivered in dirty trucks.

It stated that the system of specialized bread stores in Ashkhabad were failing to maintain a minimum assortment of bread goods. The stores were carrying on trade only in products delivered to them from the bread factories, and the latter, as a rule, were not taking into consideration the consumer demand.(50)

Uzbek SSR

A January 1953 Pravda Vostoka article stated that there are more than 1,200 stores in kolkhozes of the Uzbek SSR. In 1952, these stores sold 15 million rubles' worth of commodities more than in 1951. Kolkhoz workers buy such items as carpets, silk commodities, automobiles, motorcycles, and jewelry.(51)

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